

DECISION
With respect to the County of Simcoe Official Plan
Subsection 17(34) of the *Planning Act*

I hereby approve the County of Simcoe Official Plan Amendment No. 7 adopted by By-law 6977 subject to the following modifications, with additions of text in **bold** and deletions to text in ~~striketthrough~~.

1. Preamble, Section 4 is modified to delete references to “Municipal Comprehensive Reviews” and the “Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020)”, so that it reads:

This is the first of a series of Amendments to the County of Simcoe Official Plan that are intended to ~~implement a Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR), the purpose of which is to ensure that the Official Plan is consistent with~~ **Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 (PPS, 2024)** ~~conforms to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020)~~. In this regard, this Amendment deals with growth management. Other components of the **County’s official plan review MCR**, which involve implementing Provincial policies on natural heritage and water resource systems, agriculture and climate change will be addressed in future Official Plan Amendments. In addition, further Amendments will be required to fully implement the growth management policies established by this Amendment, including the designation of all employment areas in the County and the expansion of a settlement area that has been justified in accordance with the policies set out in this Amendment. The purpose of this Amendment is to:

2. Preamble, Section 4 a) is modified so that it reads:

Provide greater clarity on the four types of settlement areas in the County and how each of the 93 settlement areas in the County are classified for the purposes of applying the policies in ~~this the Growth Plan~~ on where growth shall be directed;

3. Preamble, Section 4 b) is modified so that it reads:

Incorporate the population and employment forecasts for the County established by **schedule 3** of the Growth Plan (**as permitted by PPS, 2024**) and allocate that population and employment forecasts to the 16 local municipalities in a manner that supports the development of complete communities, with these allocations as recommended by Hemson Consulting in a report entitled 'Growth Forecasts and Lands Needs Assessment' dated March 31, 2022 which was later modified in a memorandum dated May 31, 2022;

4. Preamble, Section 4 g) is modified so that it reads:

Establish two regional market areas in the County for the purposes of carrying out a Land Needs Analysis (LNA), ~~in accordance with the Land Needs Assessment Methodology for the Greater Golden Horseshoe,~~ the purpose of which is to ensure that there are sufficient opportunities to accommodate forecasted growth in the right locations, with the two regional market area approach recognizing that there are fundamental differences in the growth dynamics between the rapidly growing southern part of the County and the more moderately-growing northern part of the County;

5. Preamble, Section 4 j) is modified so that it reads:

Provide for future delineation of a ~~Identify a conceptual~~ major transit station area in the Bradford settlement area in the vicinity of the Bradford GO station

6. The reference to 'delineated built-up areas' is modified and replaced with '**built-up areas**' in the following policies:

- Preamble Section 4 c), d)
- Item 17, Section 3.2.2, e) i
- Item 18
 - Section 3.2.6, policy introduction, a), iv), b), Table D,
 - Section 3.2.7 c), d) i
 - Section 3.2.11

7. The reference to "Growth Plan (2006)", "Growth Plan (2020)" or "the Growth Plan" or "Section 2.2.8.3 of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020)" is modified to "Provincial Planning Statement, 2024" in the following policies:

- Item 1
- Item 17, Section 3.2.1, the last sentence of the paragraph.
- Item 37

8. Item 2, the last paragraph of Section 1.2 is modified so that it reads:

As expressed in the Provincial **Planning Policy** ~~Statement~~, County Council shall make decisions affecting planning matters that are consistent with policy statements issued under the Act, pursuant to Section 3. ~~The County of Simcoe is within the Plan area of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2006 (Growth Plan), as amended and the County Official Plan shall be in conformity with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2006 as amended.~~

9. Item 4 is modified so that it reads:

The Plan's provisions are aimed at the achievement of particular and interdependent goals which are derived from the County's Strategic Plan, the Provincial **Planning** Policy Statement, ~~the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2020-2006 as amended, prepared under the Places to Grow Act 2005.~~

10. Item 5, Section 1.4, the second paragraph is modified so that it reads:

'Any term that appears in italics, other than the name of a document, is defined in Section 5.8 or the Provincial **Policy Planning** Statement ~~or the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2006 as amended.~~'

11. Item 6, Section 2.3 of the County Official Plan is modified so that it reads:

The County of Simcoe (excluding the Cities of Barrie and Orillia) had an estimated permanent population of 360,680 and employment of 116,590 in 2021. The 2051 population and employment forecasts contained in Schedule 3 of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2020 **provides the basis** ~~are required to be used~~ for planning and managing growth in the County of Simcoe and these forecasts indicate that the population of the County will increase to 555,000 and that employment is expected to increase to 198,000.

12. Item 10, the first bullet following Category 1 is modified so that it reads:

Category 1 - Settlement areas - these are the settlement areas that have been identified as primary settlement areas by ~~this the Growth Plan~~;

13. The reference to 'delineated built boundary' is modified to '**built boundary**' in the following policies:

- Item 10, Category 2 and 3
- Item 17
 - Section 3.2.2, b) i.
 - Section 3.2.3, Table A, Category 2 and 3
- Item 31
- Schedule 5.1 Land Use Designations, legend
- Schedule B Protected Major Transit Station Area Innisfil, legend

14. Item 14 is modified so that it reads:

Section 3.1.1 (Direction of a significant portion of growth and development to settlements where it can be effectively serviced, with a particular emphasis on primary settlement areas) is further amended by replacing the words 'built boundaries' with "delineated built boundaries" and by replacing 'set out in Section 3.5' with "set out in Sections 3.2.6 and 3.2.7" in the fifth paragraph.

15. Item 17, Section 3.2.2 d) is modified so that it reads:

Growth will be limited in *settlement areas* that:

- i) ~~Are rural settlements;~~ and
- ii) ~~A~~ are not serviced by existing or planned municipal water and wastewater systems.

16. Item 18, Section 3.2.10 is modified so that reads:

Notwithstanding Section 3.2.9, lands can be considered for designation within a Category 1 or 2 settlement area through a local Official Plan Amendment if the additional lands and associated forecasted growth will be fully accounted for in the land needs assessment associated with the next *municipal comprehensive review* **official plan review** and the lands to be designated for development:

17. Item 18, Section 3.2.7 is modified to add a new subsection k) so that it reads:

Planning authorities shall undertake early engagement with Indigenous communities and coordinate on land use planning matters to facilitate knowledge-sharing, support consideration of Indigenous interests in land use decision-making and support the identification of potential impacts of decisions on the exercise of Aboriginal or treaty rights.

18. Item 18, Section 3.2.12 is modified to add the following new text and the subsequent policies are renumbered accordingly:

In addition to the growth contemplated in this Plan, future settlement area expansions in South Simcoe (i.e., Innisfil, New Tecumseth, Bradford-West Gwillimbury, Essa, and Adjala-Tosorontio), and related land use planning decisions shall be determined through the Provincial South Simcoe Growth Strategy and implemented by the Minister. Long-term growth throughout Simcoe County will also continue to be informed by other locally driven and site-specific planning processes. The Strategy is intended to support coordinated, infrastructure-led growth in South Simcoe, informed by provincial investments such as transportation, water and wastewater, healthcare, and employment. It also seeks to leverage private sector investment and contributions to support opportunities for growth, while respecting provincially protected lands.

19. Item 18, Section 3.2.12 is modified so that it reads:

This Plan identifies ~~two a~~ Major Transit Station Areas on Schedule 5.1 in ~~the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury and~~ the Town of Innisfil. Major Transit Station Areas will be planned to create a compact urban form with a diverse mix of land uses, varied housing types, tenures, and affordability, employment, and amenities in close proximity that supports existing and planned transit and active transportation infrastructure.

20. Item 18, Section 3.2.13 is modified so that it reads:

A Major Transit Station Area will be identified in the vicinity of the Bradford GO Station in the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury through a future planning process. This includes delineating the boundaries and assigning a minimum density target for the Bradford Major Transit Station Area.

~~The location of the Bradford Major Transit Station Area is conceptual and will be planned to accommodate 150 residents and jobs per hectare. The Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury shall amend its Official Plan to include this minimum density and establish permitted uses and minimum densities with respect to buildings and structures within the Major Transit Station Area. Through this process, the Town shall determine if the boundaries of the conceptual Major Transit Station Area are appropriate, and if changes to the boundary are proposed by the Town, a future Amendment to this Plan will be required to further define the Major Transit Station Area.~~

21. Item 18, the first sentence of Section 3.2.14 is modified so that it reads:

The Innisfil Major Transit Station Area will be planned to accommodate a **minimum of 170** residents and jobs per hectare and is further identified as a Protected Major Transit Station Area in accordance with Section 16(16) of the *Planning Act*.

22. Item 24, Section 3.2.25 is modified so that it reads:

At 4,613 square kilometres in size, the County of Simcoe is the third largest upper tier municipality in Ontario. Given its size and extent, there are fundamental differences in the growth dynamics between the rapidly growing southern part of the County and the more moderately-growing northern part of the County. As such, two regional market areas have been established solely for the purposes of carrying out a Land Needs Analysis (LNA) ~~in accordance with the Land Needs Assessment Methodology for the Greater Golden Horseshoe,~~ the purpose of which is to ensure that there are sufficient opportunities to accommodate forecasted growth in the right locations as set out in Section 3.2.4 and 3.2.5 of this Plan. The two regional markets areas are defined below:

- a) The northern regional market area comprises the 11 municipalities of Clearview, Collingwood, Midland, Oro-Medonte, Penetanguishene, Ramara, Severn, Springwater, Tay, Tiny, and Wasaga Beach; and
- b) The southern regional market area comprises the 5 municipalities of Adjala-Tosorontio, Bradford West Gwillimbury, Essa, Innisfil, and New Tecumseth.

23. The following items are deleted in their entirety

- Item 17, Section 3.2.2.g)
- Item 24, Section 3.2.29 v)
- Item 36
- Item 42
- Item 50
- Item 70
- Item 80
- Schedule C

24. Item 24, Section 3.2.29 ix) is modified so that it reads:

The policies of Sections 2 4 (Wise Use and Management of Resources) and 3 5 (Protecting Public Health and Safety) of the Provincial Policy **Planning** Statement are applied.

25. Item 31, the second sentence is modified to delete ‘and in accordance with Section 2.2.8.3 of the Growth Plan’

26. Item 61 is modified to replace the defined term with the definition in the Provincial Planning Statement so that it reads:

Agricultural impact assessment means the evaluation of potential impacts of non-agricultural uses on the agricultural system. An assessment recommends ways to avoid or if avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate adverse impacts.

27. Item 62 is modified to replace the defined term with the definition in the Provincial Planning Statement so that it reads:

Agricultural system means a system comprised of a group of interconnected elements that collectively create a viable, thriving agri-food sector. It has two components:

- a) **An agricultural land base comprised of prime agricultural areas, including specialty crop areas. It may also include rural lands that help to create a continuous productive land base for agriculture; and**

b) An agri-food network which includes agricultural operations, infrastructure, services, and assets important to the viability of the agri-food sector.

28. Item 63 is modified to replace the defined term with the definition in the Provincial Planning Statement so that it reads:

Agri-food network means within the agricultural system, a network that includes elements important to the viability of the agri-food sector such as regional infrastructure and transportation networks; agricultural operations including on-farm buildings and primary processing; infrastructure; agricultural services, farm markets, and distributors; and vibrant, agriculture-supportive communities.

29. Item 64 is modified so that it reads:

~~"Delineated Built Boundary means the limits of the developed urban area as defined by the Minister in consultation with affected municipalities for the purpose of measuring the minimum intensification target in this Plan.~~

~~Delineated Built-up Area means all land within the delineated built boundary."~~

30. Item 65 is modified to replace the defined term with the definition in the Provincial Planning Statement so that it reads:

Complete communities means places such as mixed-use neighbourhoods or other areas within cities, towns, and settlement areas that offer and support opportunities for equitable access to many necessities for daily living for people of all ages and abilities, including an appropriate mix of jobs, a full range of housing, transportation options, public service facilities, local stores and services. Complete communities are inclusive and may take different shapes and forms appropriate to their contexts to meet the diverse needs of their populations.

31. Item 68 is modified so that it reads:

~~Designated Greenfield Area means lands within settlement areas (not including rural settlements) but outside of delineated-built-up areas that have been designated in an official plan for development and are required to accommodate forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan. Designated greenfield areas do not include excess lands.~~

32. Item 71 is modified so that it reads:

~~Section 5.7 Definitions is amended by deleting '2005' in the definition of Provincial Policy Statement and replacing it with "2020".~~

Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) refers to the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024, issued under Section 3 of the *Planning Act*.

33. Item 72 is modified to replace the defined term with the definition in the Provincial Planning Statement so that it reads:

Public service facilities means land, buildings and structures, including but not limited to schools, hospitals and community recreation facilities, for the provision of programs and services provided or subsidized by a government or other body, such as social assistance, recreation, police and fire protection, health, child care and educational programs, including elementary, secondary, post-secondary, long-term care services, and cultural services. Public service facilities do not include infrastructure.

34. Item 75 is modified to replace the defined term with the definition in the Provincial Planning Statement so that it reads:

Settlement areas: means urban areas and rural settlement areas within municipalities (such as cities, towns, villages and hamlets). Ontario's settlement areas vary significantly in terms of size, density, population, economic activity, diversity and intensity of land uses, service levels, and types of infrastructure available.

Settlement areas are:

- a) **built-up areas where development is concentrated and which have a mix of land uses; and**
- b) **lands which have been designated in an official plan for development over the long term.**

35. Item 77 is modified to replace the defined term with the definition in the Provincial Planning Statement so that it reads:

Strategic Growth Areas: means within settlement areas, nodes, corridors, and other areas that have been identified by municipalities to be the focus for accommodating intensification and higher-density mixed uses in a more compact built form.

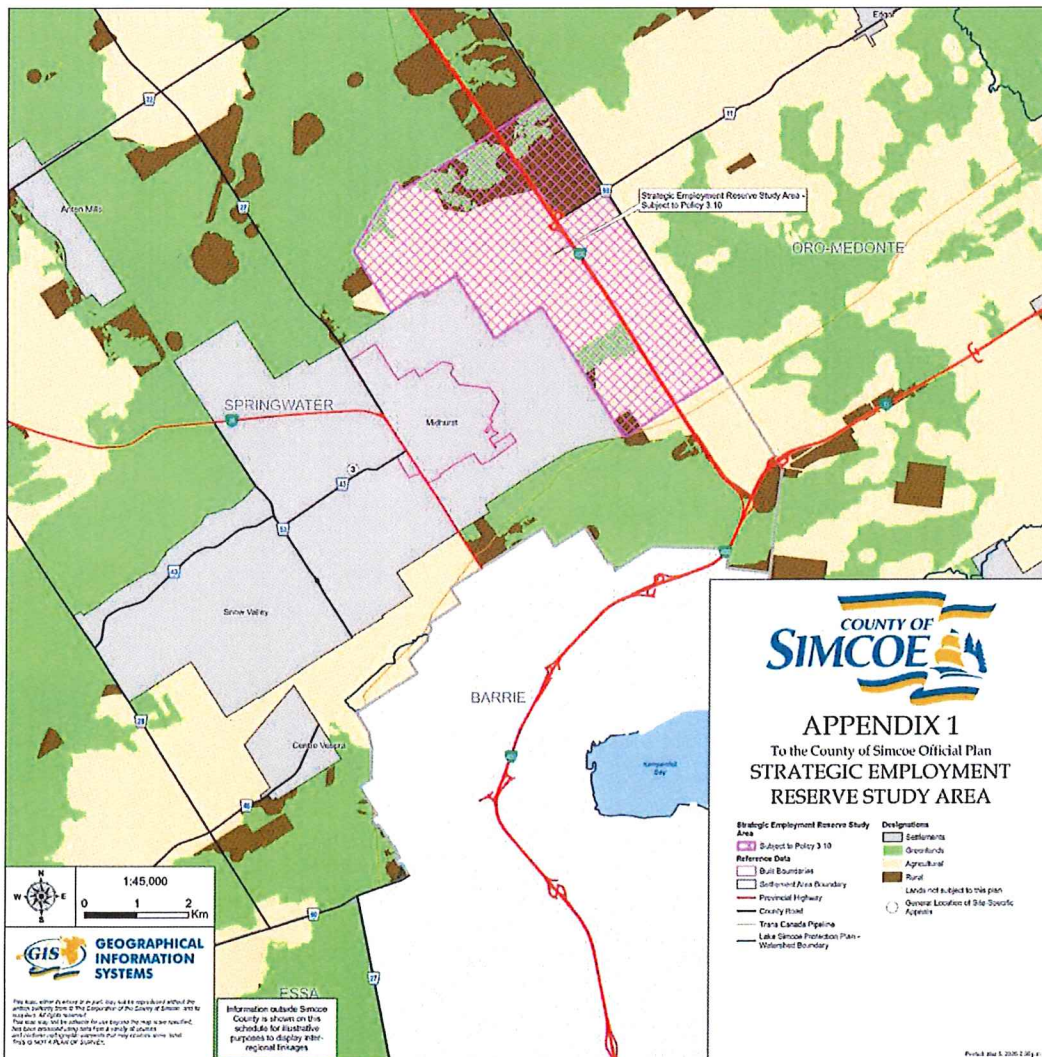
Strategic growth areas include major transit station areas, existing and emerging downtowns, lands in close proximity to publicly-assisted post-secondary institutions and other areas where growth or development will be focused, that may include infill, redevelopment (e.g., underutilized shopping malls and plazas), brownfield sites, the expansion or conversion of existing buildings, or greyfields. Lands along major roads, arterials, or

other areas with existing or planned frequent transit service or higher order transit corridors may also be identified as strategic growth areas.

36. Section 3.10 is modified to add the following new text and appendix, and the subsequent policies are renumbered accordingly:

3.10 Strategic Employment Reserve Study Area (SERSA)

This Plan identifies Strategic Employment Reserve Study Areas (SERSA) as a key location for long-term future regional employment in Simcoe County. Located near key highway and railway infrastructure in the Township of Springwater as shown in Appendix 1 of this plan, the location of the SERSA will be further refined following technical study and public consultation and implemented through future County Official Plan Amendment(s).

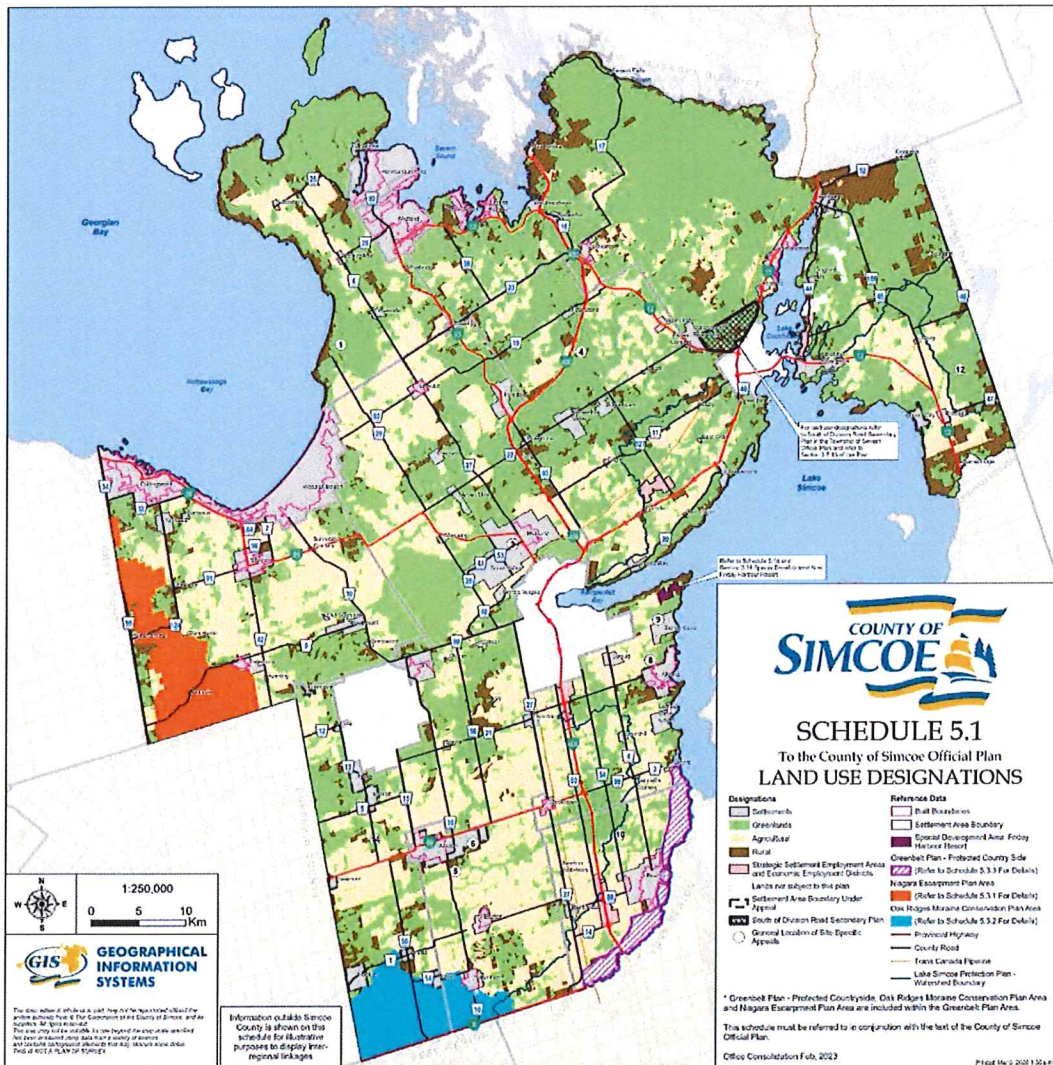


37. Section 3.15 is modified to add the following new text, and the subsequent policies are renumbered accordingly:

3.15 Site-Specific Policies

Land uses and permissions established through Zoning Order 003-2026, O.Reg. 563/24, O.Reg. 525/22, O.Reg. 251/19, O.Reg. 568/21, O.Reg. 37/22, O.Reg. 158/25, O.Reg. 220/25, O.Reg. 166/21, O.Reg. 362/19, O.Reg. 41/22, O.Reg. 608/20, O.Reg. 206/25, and O.Reg. 601/21 are recognized in this plan.

38. Schedule 5.1 is modified to add lands to the Strategic Settlement Areas and Economic Employment District related to the existing Lake Simcoe Regional Airport Employment Economic District.



Signed at Toronto this 7th day of APRIL 2026.



Sean Fraser
Assistant Deputy Minister
Municipal and Housing Operations Division
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing